CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS OF 8 APRIL 1950[1]

On 8 April 1950, at 17:20, an aircraft-violator was detected northwest of Vindava.[2] According to the reports of the four aircraft commanders who took off to intercept the violator, it was detected at 17:39 eight kilometers south of Liepaya near the settlement of Tsenkona. It was on a course of 270° when it was brought down by gunfire. All the [Soviet] pilots believe that the aircraft went down 5-10 kilometers from the coast. Regimental commander Filanovich, who flew to the area, observed an oil slick at 56° 30' 0 North latitude, 20°28' East longitude, and an unidentified floating object three miles to the north of this. On 9 April, two torpedo boats, the TKA-423 and the TKA-424, arrived in Liepaya.

On 17 April, two small antisubmarine ships MO-206 and MO-201 set out to conduct a special mission in the search area.

On 22 April, the rescue ship "Ruslan" and the diving workshops VM-14 and V M-15 arrived in Liepaya.

On that same day, the Minister of the Naval Forces ordered the 15th Division of mine sweepers to head immediately to the search area.

On the night of 4-5 May, in an area 15 miles to the west of the settlement of Sernaten (32 kilometers south of Vindava), a rubber packet with the notation "USN" was picked up from the ocean by fishermen. In the packet were three composite duralumin paddles, a manual forced air pump, two torn tarpaulin tents, and a torn silk camouflage poncho. The fishermen handed this over to the 8th Border Guards Detachment, which was stationed in Vindava.

On 7 May, divers brought up a piece of gray-colored rubber

with a sharp odor of gasoline and a newly burnt edge which, "by all appearances, was a part of the gas tank of the aircraft."

From the "File on Search Operations in the Liepaya Region" it appears that the participants in the search were:

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[1] These documents represent chronologies of the 8 April 1950 shoot-down of a U.S. Navy PB4Y2 over the Baltic Sea, and the 1 July 1960 shoot-down of a U.S. Air Force RB-47 over the Barents Sea. They were presented as written reports to the U.S. side during the Third Meeting of Principals in Washington, D.C. in April 2001, by Rear Admiral (ret) Boris Gavrilovich Novyy, an expert advisor to the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs.

[2] Ventspils.

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1. Ships of two minesweeper brigades, which included 6 minesweepers of the 15th Division;
2. Seven ships of the "Sea Region Guard;"
3. Ships of the emergency rescue detachment of the 4th Naval Fleet: the rescue ship "Ruslan;" the diver workshops VM-12, 13, 14, and 15; the hydrographic vessels "Rulevoy" and "Barograf."

There were a total of 161 divers.

From the "1950 Annual Report on the Activities of the Emergency Rescue Detachments," it appears that "In 1950 a special mission was carried out on the open sea in the region of the Liepaya Naval Base. 25 divers from the 75th Emergency Rescue Detachment (ASO) and more than 100 divers from other fleets participated."

From 22 April to 27 June, divers from the SS-"Ruslan" (deep sea divers) and the diver workshop VM-1Y operated at a depth of 45-86 meters.

In charge of the workers was the commander of the 75th Emergency Rescue Detachment Kuleshov, the commander of the VM-14 Lyamen and senior diving specialist Tikhon Stepanovich Alekseyev. The commanders of the torpedo boats TKA-423 and TKA-424 were E.S. Kuznetsov and A.V. Mishin respectively. The chief petty officers on these boats were Malyukov and Bondarenko.

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The commander of the small submarine hunter MO-206, V.L. Mamonov, confirmed that the MO-206 and MO-201 participated in the operations, but neither the aircraft nor bodies of the aircrew were found. The commander of the minesweeper BEhMTShch-183, which was part of the 15th Division, V.I. Rumyantsev, told me, "Operating procedures were very strict. Not all the information reached the commanders of the minesweepers. There were a lot of divers. On board was the commander of the Fourth Naval Fleet Andreyev." For Rumyantsev, the sudden halt to sweeping operations in May still seems very strange. No aircraft wreckage or bodies of pilots were found. I [Novyy] called him on 27 March (2001) and 13 April (2001). In response to reports that were published in newspapers stating that bodies had been found and the aircraft had been raised, he said that of course they would have known. Work was conducted in only one area. It was not conducted closer to the shore. It was terminated because the search disrupted the plan to clear the Baltic of mines, which was under the control of the minister of the Naval Forces and the government. He also believed that bodies could have been found on the shore by local inhabitants or border guards between Liepaya and Vindavy, because the current in that region is northeasterly.

In the 15th Division, the operative from the Ministry of State Security was Lieutenant N.A. Shpitanov. The chief of staff of the Division was O.V. Shulman, who possibly resided in the city of Kaliningrad.

It is strange that the aircraft was shot down on 8 April, and the sweepers began the operation only on 17 April. It is possible that during the period from 8 April to 17 April the bodies of the pilots were found by coastal town inhabitants, fishermen or border guards,

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and this served as the reason for commencing search operations. It is very strange that no aircraft wreckage was found in the search area. Possibly the wrong area was searched. The most likely place where the aircraft crashed, according to the radar station report, was 56° 27' 0 North latitude, 20° 27' East longitude. The search area was:

1. 56° 35' latitude, 20° 22' longitude
   56° 25' latitude, 20° 38' longitude
   56° 31' latitude, 20° 22' longitude
   56° 25' latitude, 20° 38' longitude

2. 56° 24' 5 latitude, 20° 22' 8 longitude
   56° 29' 5 latitude, 20° 22' 8 longitude
   56° 29' 5 latitude, 20° 31' 6 longitude
   56° 24' 5 latitude, 20° 31' 6 longitude

   Search area = 48.9 nautical miles, 166.4 square kilometers

However, according to the pilots' reports, the aircraft crashed 5-10 km to the west of Liepaya. This area was not searched.

Proposals:

1. Seek documents of the 8th Border Guards Detachment in the Archives of the Federal Border Guards Service. The purpose here is to find former personnel who served in the detachment and its outposts, who might have been witnesses to or participants in the burial of bodies of the aircraft crewmembers.

2. Locate inhabitants and fishermen who also could have been witnesses to these events in Vindava, Sernatema and other coastal towns between Liepaya and Vindavy.

3. Obtain the addresses of sailors from the 75th Emergency Rescue Detachment and torpedo boats and meet with them.

I believe that if the sunken aircraft had been present in the area that was searched, it would have been found. I suggest conducting another search with more precise equipment.

4. Find information about the fate of N.A. Shpitanov in the FSB Archives.

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS OF 1 JULY 1960 SHOOT-DOWN OF RB-47

On 1 July 1960 at 17:23 radar stations of the Air Defense Forces on the Rybachiy Peninsula detected an RB-47 240 km. from Voitalakhta (Rybachiy Peninsula) flying at an altitude of 9000 meters with a course of "South."

At 17:33 the aircraft turned to the southeast and flew along the shoreline of the Kola Peninsula at a distance of not less than 100 km. from the coast.

At 18:04 the aircraft, which was abeam of the Kanin Nos peninsula, turned to a heading of "North."

At 18:17 the aircraft exited the radar coverage zone. In all likelihood, it was shot down by Polyakov before 18:17. The first search aircraft, a Be-6, took off to the region of Kanin Nos on 2 July 1960 at 16:31. On 3 July 1960 another Be-6 detected a white lifebuoy at 69° 28' North latitude, 40° 20' East longitude. Be-6 aircraft flew to this area on 4 July and on 5 July.

The fishing trawler RT-291, at 23:45 on 5 July, 5 hours and 40 minutes after the aircraft went down, picked up two men. They were the co-pilot, Bruce Olmstead, and the navigator, John McKone.

The small antisubmarine ship MPK-438, at 05:15 on 2 July picked up a rubber lifeboat with the body of the pilot, who was wrapped in the shroud lines of his parachute. It was the commander of the aircraft, Willard Palm. He was found at 69° 16' North latitude, 40° 30' East longitude. On 5 July, at 23:00, the rescue ship SS "Ala-Tay" recovered a bag with foreign documents from the water.

American rescue aircraft were noted

on 5 July at 17:25 in a region northeast of Teriberka 30 miles from the coastline, and on 7 July northwest of cape Kanin Nos at a distance of 90 miles.

By order of Fleet Commander Chabanenko, on 6 July 1960, a search and recovery unit was formed that consisted of the rescue ships SS-11, SS "Aldan," two trawlers and a heavy lifting vessel for search and recovery of aircraft. An intensive search by aircraft and ships of this unit continued until 20 August 1960 in the Kanin Nos peninsula region. On 20 August the search for the RB-47 was terminated.

During the first hours of July, Bruce Olmstead and John McKone were taken to the airfield "Arktika" (close to Murmansk), and were put on a Li-2 airplane (the pilot was

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F.A. Getman, and the navigator was R.I. Kuptsov). They were taken to an airfield near Moscow on this naval military transport aircraft, where they were greeted by a group of men dressed in civilian clothes with several automobiles.

The body of Palm was kept at Yokanga Naval Base, the closest military base to the place where the aircraft went down, until 26 July 1960. On 27 July, the body was flown by military air transport to Moscow in a zinc coffin. The zinc coffin was made at one of the ship repair factories of the Northern Fleet.

On 14 October 1960 at 13:00, the duty officer for military transport communications from Murmansk reported to the operational duty officer of the fleet in Severomorsk that fishing trawler RT-28 had pulled up an unidentified pilot with a parachute in an area of heavy fishing. By order of the Commander of the Fleet,

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an escort ship, the SKR-56 commanded by Smol'nikov, the senior man on board, departed from Yokanga Naval Base to point 69° 05' North latitude, 40° 45' East longitude.

The weather was stormy, so the small boat that was lowered into the water, commanded by the ship's doctor, Ya. V. Tkach, was not able to reach the RT-28.

At 20:46 the RT-167 raised a section of the rear portion of the aircraft, several parts and a second parachute in a fishing area. L.G. Garkusha, the senior man on board the SKR-56,[3] made the decision to transfer the body, the wing of the aircraft and the aircraft parts that had been brought up by 12 trawlers, at the base. The RT-28 and RT-167 came to the base during the night of 15 October 1960, where the body of Eugene Posa (who was identified from a document that was found in the upper pocket of his leather jacket) and the aircraft wreckage were transferred to the SKR-56.

On15 October in Moscow, a report was made from the base to Shelepin, the former chairman of the KGB. On the same day, Shelepin made a written report to Nikita Khrushchev. Because of stormy weather, the SKR-56 remained at Yokanga Naval Base until 18 October.

When the weather improved on 18 October 1960, the SKR-56, with the body of Posa and the aircraft wreckage, departed from Yokanga, and at 03:30 on 19 October 1960 entered the Kola Gulf "with a delivery of cargo from Operation Ersh" (as the search operation was called).

At 5 o'clock on the morning of 19 October, the SKR pulled into berth number 1. The division commander of the escort ships, Antonov, was the commander on board the

[3] Lev Georgiyevich Garkusha was chief of staff to Admiral Kutay, the Commander of Yokanga Naval Base at the time of the 1 July 1960 shoot-down and when Posa's body was found in October 1960. Garkusha was embarked onto the SKR-56 at some point on 14 October.—Translator.

ship; Yu.A. Muravyev, an officer from the Special Department of the KGB at Yokanga Naval Base, was also on board. A group of staff officers from the Special Department of the KGB of the Northern Fleet, the KGB of the Murmansk region, and also a representative of the KGB from Moscow and possibly a representative from the General Staff of the Naval Forces met the ship at the shore.

Major M.A. Ponomarev, the chief of the General Department of the Northern Fleet Staff, supervised the off-loading of the body and aircraft parts from the boat.

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Ponomarev was directly subordinated to Chief of Staff A.I. Rassokho. Posa was wrapped in a parachute and was stored in the auxiliary command post of the anti-aircraft guns. His [redacted] was missing (according to Muravev and I.G. Kiselev, who was the ship's watch officer). After permission to remove the corpse was given by the chief of the Fleet medical service, V.V. Semenov, the body of Posa was placed on a transport vehicle from the headquarters garage. The driver of this vehicle was I.V. Sharopanyuk, a civilian employee. (b) (6)

Unexpectedly for Ponomarev, a canvas-covered truck called a "Voronok" drove up to the dock, and the body of Posa was loaded onto it. The "Voronok" drove away from the dock. Ponomarev reported this to A.I. Rassokho. The chief of the headquarters garage, A.M. Karyabin, who was not at the dock, surmises that the "Voronok" could have come from the special department of the Fleet KGB, the KGB of Murmansk oblast, the Northern Fleet medical service or Fleet Aviation.

The fact that Ponomarev recalls that the man in charge of the "Voronok" said that the body would be sent to Moscow deserves attention. It is possible that he was from Fleet Aviation. Even before this it was established that there was such a vehicle at the aviation maintenance base, and it was used to transport people. The aircraft parts were analyzed, their functions determined and reported to the chief aviation engineer Savin. They were taken to aviation headquarters on an open transport vehicle. By 08:00, the report for Shelepin was ready, and it was transmitted by high frequency to Moscow. This report was signed by the Chairman of the Murmansk Region KGB Borovlev and the deputy chief of the Special Department of the Fleet KGB Chizhevskiy.

At 10:00 on 19 October, a meeting of the party oblast committee,

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which was headed by first secretary Denisov, was held. Boravev and representatives of the Fleet Headquarters and "Northern Fishing" were also present. At this meeting, it was decided to assign fishing trawlers to the fleet in order to continue the search operations for the aircraft.

On the afternoon of 19 October, Getman (the commander of the Li-2 airplane) took off for Moscow from the Severomorsk airfield. His mission was to "transport passengers." On board the airplane to Moscow were the men who had met the SKR-56, and who had Posa's documents. Perhaps they witnessed the burial of Posa.

At 17:15 on 20 October, a fragment from the RB-47 aircraft's wing was off-loaded from the escort ship, "which we carried around for so long."

Unfortunately, the deck log, in which is recorded the transfer of Posa's body from the fishermen to the ship, and then from the ship to the shore, are missing. The deck log was transferred from the ship to Fleet Headquarters by order of the chief of staff and was not returned to the ship. It is possible the deck log was among the documents of the representatives of the KGB of the USSR and the Main Staff of the Naval Forces who flew on the Li-2.

The search operation for the aircraft was renewed on 20 October, and continued to the end of 1960. The trawlers TShch-250, TShch-129, the hydrographic vessel GISU "Mayak," the rescue ship SS-11, the reconnaissance ships "Soyga" and "Mikoga," the fishing trawlers RT-188, RT-31, RT-18, RT-28, RT-167 and the small antisubmarine ship MPK-438 were used in the operation. Beginning on 12 November, the fishing trawler "Logger," with a military detachment on board, was present in the area of the search for three days.

During the search operation, personal weapons belonging to the aircrew members and other items were found.

[TFR 716-10]

Proposals:

1. Study the correspondence of the ZGU of the KGB from the Special Department of the KGB of the Northern Fleet in the FSB archives;

2. Find the chiefs of the garages and information of the drivers, who worked in the garage of the Special Department of the Northern Fleet and the KGB of the Murmansk region.

Most importantly, find information concerning GAZ-51 transport vehicles. This may be found in departmental telegrams.

3. In the archives of the Federal Border Guards Service, find documents of the 82nd Border Guards Detachment with its Border Guards outposts (on Kildin Island and the Kola Gulf), and also the drivers of the transport vehicles and the chief of the garage.